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FM AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0668
INFO RUEHB/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 7088
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO PRIORITY 7406
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA PRIORITY 2737
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY 5448
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 6572
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 3186
RUEHCI/AMCONSUL KOLKATA PRIORITY 4720
RUEHCN/AMCONSUL CHENGDU PRIORITY 0480
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY 2392
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 3627
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RHMFSS/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L KATHMANDU 000787

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/24/2019

TAGS: [PREF](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [NP](#) [CH](#)

SUBJECT: NEPAL: FM SYMPATHETIC ON TIBET BUT CHANGE UNLIKELY

REF: KATHMANDU 00679 AND PREVIOUS

Classified By: Charge d' Affaires, a.i., Jeffrey A. Moon. Reasons 1.4 (b/d).

¶1. (C) In an August 24 meeting with Foreign Minister Sujata Koirala (septel), Charge expressed U.S. concern about recent, and highly inaccurate, reports in the Nepali media linking the Tibetan Reception Center to anti-Chinese activities. Noting the U.S.-funded Center is well-respected and plays an important role in assisting Tibetan refugees transiting to India, Charge told the Foreign Minister that the recent reports were erroneous and extremely unhelpful. Charge noted the importance of allowing Tibetans to express themselves freely in Nepal and advocated for refugee registration as a step toward a durable solution for Tibetan refugees in Nepal (reftel).

¶2. (C) The Foreign Minister expressed her personal sympathy for the plight of Tibetan refugees, but said the issue was "a big headache" and "difficult for us," given the sensitivities of the Nepal-Chinese relationship. Comparing the Tibetan refugees' plight to Nepal's own struggle for freedom, the Foreign Minister said her father, Nepali Congress leader and former PM G.P. Koirala, tells the story of his time as a political prisoner, where he enjoyed good food and clothing, but said these material comforts meant little without his freedom. Similarly, for Tibetans, economic development is not enough; they need freedom as well.

¶3. (C) Comment: While the Foreign Minister's sympathy for the plight of the Tibetan refugees is encouraging, we do not expect this to translate into GON action, such as a decision on the registration of Tibetan refugees. The current coalition government, struggling for its own political survival, is unlikely to take on China on this highly sensitive issue. End Comment.

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